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Haringey Council

Adoption Support Services in Haringey

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Introduction

What are Adoption Support Services?

The London Borough of Haringey is an adoption agency. Under the Adoption and Children Act 2002, Adoption Support Regulations (2003) have been introduced that require local authorities to make a range of adoption support services available to meet the needs of people affected by adoption, including children and adults who are adopted, birth relatives, adoptive families, step-parent adopters and inter-country adopters. The Regulations also make provision for the support of contact arrangements between adopted children and their birth relatives.

The Adoption Support Services Adviser (ASSA) is a Senior Practitioner in the Adoption Team and a key point of contact for anyone who needs advice about adoption support.



Adoptive Families and Parents

Who can ask for Adoption Support?

- Adoptive families living in Haringey
- Adults and young people placed for adoption through Haringey Social Services
- Adopted adults resident in Haringey who want access to their birth records (even if another adoption agency dealt with your adoption)
- Haringey residents who are birth relatives of adopted people

What kind of support is available?

- Counselling, advice and information
- Assessment of Adoption Support Needs
- Therapeutic Services
- Support with contact arrangements
- Support groups for all parties to adoption
- Training and Workshops
- Financial Support
- Intermediary Service

Adoptive Parents

Counselling, Advice and Information

We recognise that adoption is a lifelong commitment and we aim to support new and existing families, before, during and after adoption.

We offer advice, information and counselling and can also direct you, if necessary, to agencies like Post Adoption Centre (PAC) who have a wealth of knowledge and experience on all aspects of adoption.

Assessment of Adoption Support Needs

If your adopted son or daughter is under 18 years old, and you live in Haringey, you may ask for an assessment of your adoption support needs if:

- Haringey dealt with the adoption

- You adopted through another adoption agency, Local Authority or have adopted from overseas and the adoption order was granted over three years ago.

If you adopted through Haringey and live in another Local Authority, we will provide adoption support for three years after the adoption order is granted. Beyond three years, you should approach the Local Authority in which you live to ask for support. We would of course be happy to assist you in making contact with the correct person in your local authority.



Under the Adoption Support Regulations (2003) you are entitled to ask for an Assessment of your Adoption Support Needs. This assessment will explore your family's circumstances to identify your needs. Many requests for advice or support can be dealt with very quickly and families will be signposted to appropriate services. However, there are some children and families with more complex needs who may need a more detailed assessment before a decision is made about how to provide support. Following assessment, an adoption support plan is written with the details of support that may be identified by Haringey's Adoption Support Service e.g. therapeutic services. There is no automatic entitlement to services. All Local Authorities must act reasonably in deciding whether to provide services following an assessment.

To request an Adoption Support Assessment, please write, telephone or e-mail the Adoption Support Service at the address or telephone number at the back of this

booklet. You may expect a response to your request within five working days after we receive it.

Therapeutic Services

Haringey Adoption Support Service works closely with the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), and other local resources that can provide therapeutic support to adopted children and their families. We recognise that adoption brings with it particular challenges and where there is an assessed need for therapeutic support we will support families to access this.



Contact arrangements

All contact arrangements are usually arranged before an Adoption Order is made, with a signed agreement outlining the type and frequency of contact and with whom. There are different types of contact:

- Letterbox Contact – This enables indirect contact to be maintained between adopted children and their birth families through the exchange of written information between you and your child's birth relatives. This could include photographs, birthday cards and newsletters. This is a confidential service which is managed by the Adoption Support Service in Haringey.

- Direct Contact – This is face to face contact between your family and your child's birth family. We can help in preparing all parties for contact, and with practical arrangements like providing places to meet, supervision of contact if required and sometimes help with expenses.

We also offer a mediation service if there are disputes, or if changes in contact need to be agreed.

Support Groups

Haringey Adoption Support Service assists adoptive parents to access support groups and is keen to consider other ways in which adoptive families can support each other. Parents who are members of Adoption UK can also access regular support groups via the local North/North-West London Group.

British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) also runs a support group for Black adoptive parents. Please refer to contact details at the back of this booklet.



Training and Workshops

As part of the North London Adoption Consortium (NLAC) Haringey offers a programme of workshops to all Haringey adopters over the course of the year. The Adoption Support Service has links with The Post Adoption Centre (PAC) and Adoption UK who run training and workshops on a range of adoption issues. We would be happy to provide further information about the range of courses as well as the charges.

Please refer to contact details at the back of this booklet.

Financial Support

Following an Assessment of your Adoption Support Needs, financial support may be agreed depending on the specific needs of your child. This may be in the form of a lump sum payment, a series of lump sums or ongoing regular payments. All ongoing regular payments are reviewed annually to take into account any changes in household income and expenses. Financial

support paid to adoptive families is exempt from tax and is disregarded when calculating eligibility for tax credits and welfare benefits.



Haringey applies a means test when making financial payments. The provision of financial support is not an automatic entitlement. The Adoption Support Social Worker will look at your finances with you and help you to find out if you are entitled to any tax credits or other welfare benefits.



Receiving information

Adoptive parents receive regular mailings through the year to advise about workshops, seminars and other important events that might be of interest. If you are an adoptive parent living in Haringey and do not receive this, please contact us at the address at the back of this booklet.

If you do not wish to receive information please let us know.



Adopted Adults

Looking for birth records for adopted adults living in Haringey



If you are just beginning to think about looking for your birth records and don't know where to start, you can talk to us on the telephone and we will be happy to advise you about the steps you need to take.

If you are a Haringey resident and you were adopted before November 1975, and have no information about your birth details or the agency that placed you for adoption, you will need to apply to the General Registrar's Office (GRO) for a copy of your birth record.

The GRO holds information on all adoption records and will be able to help you. You will be asked to attend a counselling interview before any details are given to you.

This interview will help you to understand more about accessing your birth details and will support you through this process. You may choose to have your interview with the Adoption Support Social Worker in Haringey.



All referrals from the General Register Office are dealt with promptly and a counselling interview will be offered to you within 4 to 6 weeks of receiving the referral from the General Register Office.

Although it is not compulsory, we also offer a counselling interview to adults adopted after November 1975 to ensure that they are best supported through this process. Anyone adopted after 30th December 2005 must apply to their adoption agency for access to information, including birth records counselling. There is no legal

requirement to undergo counselling although it is recommended.

Please see the list of organisations and addresses at the back of this booklet.

If you know which agency placed you for adoption

If you are a Haringey resident, and were adopted through another agency or local authority, you can choose whether to receive your counselling interview in Haringey or the other agency.

Adopted Adults and Adoption Records

Adopted adults are entitled to have access to their adoption records from the age of 18 years. Like all Adoption Agencies, Haringey is legally required to keep adoption records for 100 years.

If you are 18 or over, were adopted through Haringey and still live in the borough, and you want to know more about the circumstances of

your adoption, the Adoption Support Service will be able to help and advise you. If you were adopted through Haringey and now live outside the borough, we will work with your current local authority to help you.

Your adoption record may contain sensitive information about the circumstances of your adoption. Hearing about your past, may provoke emotions that make you feel anxious, excited or scared. We will support you when you read information from your records and take things at your pace. Our role is to support and advise you and discuss the right course of action for you. You may also wish to bring a friend to appointments to support you.

If you want to access your records, you need to write to the Adoption Support Service at the address at the back of this booklet, giving your adoptive name, date of birth, and your birth name if you know it. We will need proof of your identity before we access confidential records.

This is a very popular service and there is a very short waiting list to which your name will be added. You will receive an acknowledgement letter which will indicate how long it will be before you will receive a service.

If you are a Haringey resident and know that another agency handled your adoption, you can contact them direct. You may choose to ask a Social Worker from Haringey's Adoption Support Service or the other agency, to support you.

Intermediary Service

Adopted adults may wish to make contact with their birth relatives. Research shows that approaches to adopted people and birth relatives are much more successful if made through an intermediary. Reunions can be very emotionally demanding. We are available if you would like to discuss your feelings or concerns.

If you are over 18 and were adopted before 30th December 2005, you may request an intermediary service from Haringey Adoption Support

Service or from another agency approved to do so.

Please write to us giving details and proof of identity.

We will try to trace your birth relatives and act as an intermediary. We will not be able to divulge new information without the consent of your birth relative. We operate a short waiting list for this popular service.

If you have traced a birth relative and would like help in approaching them we are able to offer you an intermediary service.

If you do not wish any contact to be made with you by a birth relative, you may register a 'qualified' or 'absolute' veto with the agency that dealt with your adoption. You may also register a wish for 'no contact' on the General Registrar's Adoption Contact Register. Counselling support is available from the Adoption Support Service. We will also put you in touch with agencies that can help you such as NORCAP (National Organisation for Counselling of Adoptees and Parents) or the Family Records Centre.

Adopted children and young people

If you are under 18, you are entitled to ask for an Assessment of your Adoption Support Needs. You might wish to do this if you were dissatisfied with contact arrangements for example, have difficulties within your adoptive family or wish to discuss something about your adoption.

If you want access to your birth records, we suggest that you discuss this with your adoptive parents. When you are 18 you will be entitled to see your adoption file.

Write, telephone or email the Adoption Support Service at the address given at the back of this booklet.



Birth Relatives

Who can ask for Adoption Support

Haringey Adoption Support Service works with birth parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles who have been separated from their relatives through adoption.

What kind of Support is available?

- Support with contact arrangements
- Adoption support needs assessment
- Tracing and Intermediary Services
- Access to support groups

Contact arrangements with children placed for adoption by Haringey

All contact arrangements should be agreed before your child is adopted and the frequency and type of contact and who is involved will be confirmed in writing. There are two types of contact arrangements:

- Indirect Letterbox contact –

Birth and adoptive families share information about the child by post. This can include photographs, birthday cards and letters. If you have a written agreement for a letterbox exchange with an adopted child and need help in writing a letter you can contact the Adoption Support Service for guidance. There is no waiting list for this service. If you have not received your expected letter or photograph, you can contact the Letterbox Co-ordinator who will follow this up on your behalf.

If any mail can not be forwarded for any reason (if you or the adopted family have moved) it will be held confidentially on a letterbox file in

Haringey. Please ensure that you keep us informed of any change of address.

- **Direct Contact** – You meet your child and their new family from time to time. We can provide places to meet, supervisors who will help the meeting go well and financial help with travelling expenses if you need it.

If you have an agreement for direct contact with an adopted child which involves the Adoption Support Service, we will contact you to make the necessary arrangements about the date, place and time that the contact is due to take place. If there are disputes or changes in contact we offer a mediation service.

If you want contact with your adopted child

You can contact the Adoption Support Service and give them the names and dates of birth of the children with whom you would like contact. The Adoption Support Social Worker will look at information in the child's/children's adoption files before making contact with the adoptive parents at their last known address. The welfare and the wishes

of the child and their adoptive family will be the prime consideration.

It may not be possible to make contact with the adoptive family if they have moved or do not reply to letters or phone calls. Adoptive families are only obliged to maintain contact with birth family members through the Local Authority if the court made a Contact Order when the Adoption Order was granted. If the adoptive family does not agree to contact, you can send letters, cards and photographs which will be kept on the child's file. The child will receive these if he or she decides to access their birth records after the age of 18.



Adoption Support Needs Assessment

If you are a birth relative of a child who has been placed for adoption, you can ask for an Assessment of your Adoption Support Needs to consider any contact arrangements that you have with the adopted child.

Tracing Adopted Adults

Haringey Adoption Support Service will assist you in tracing and support you through this process. We will work with any other Adoption Support Agency, Adoption Agency, Local Authority or the General Registrar's Office to assist you in your search. We will provide you with information about contact registers, which enable you to register your details, making links with your adopted relative possible, and can put you in touch with agencies such as National Organisation for Counselling Adoptees and Parents (NORCAP) and the Natural Parents Network.

Intermediary Service

If your adopted son or daughter has been traced, we are able to offer you an intermediary service to help you in approaching them. The intermediary will be a Social Worker from the Adoption Support Service who will be able to obtain

information about your son's or daughter's adoption and will act as an independent third person to help you make contact with them. Research shows that approaches to adopted people and birth relatives, are much more successful if made through an intermediary. Reunions can be very emotionally demanding. We offer a service if you would like to discuss your feelings or concerns.

Support Groups

Haringey does not currently run support groups for birth relatives. We refer birth parents to a support group run by the Post Adoption Centre which is based in Kentish Town. If you would like information about support groups please contact the Adoption Support Service who will try to locate a group for you.

Please write to Adoption Support Services at the address at the back of this booklet.

Useful Organisations

**Please contact the
Adoption Support
Services Adviser (ASSA)
and Adoption Support
Service at:**

Haringey Adoption Support Service

Adoption Team
40 Cumberland Road
Wood Green London
N22 7SG

020 8489 3309

www.haringey.gov.uk

The General Register Offices for England and Wales

Adoptions Section
Room C202
The General Register Office
Trafalgar Road
Southport Merseyside
PR8 2HH

0151 471 4755

www.direct.gov.uk

The General Register Office (GRO) forms part of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) – an independent government body, which produces regular analysis of social, economic and business information.

The General Register Office for Scotland

New Register House
3 West Register Street
Edinburgh EH1 3YT

0131 334 0380

www.gro-scotland.gov.uk

The General Register Office for Northern Ireland

The Registrar General
Oxford House
49- 55 Chichester Street
Belfast
BT1 4HL

028 9025 2000

www.nidirect.gov.uk/gro

Post Adoption Centre (PAC)

5 Torriano Mews
Torriano Avenue
London NW5 2RZ

020 7284 0555

Advice Line

020 7284 5879

10am -1pm (Monday-Friday)

5:30pm-7:30pm (Wednesday and
Thursday)

www.postadoptioncentre.org.uk

Offers a confidential specialist advice service counselling and family work for anyone who has been involved with adoption.

BAAF (British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering)

Saffron House
6-10 Kirby Street
London EC1N 8TS

020 7421 2600

www.baaf.org.uk

Adoption UK

Liden House
55 The Green
South Bar Street
Banbury
OX16 9AB

01295 752240

www.adoption.uk.org

Natural Parents Network

18 Bishops Way
Stradbroke Eye
Suffolk
IP21 5RJ

0845 4565031

www.n-p-n.co.uk

London Metropolitan Archive

40 Northampton Road
London EC1R OHB

020 7606 3030

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

AFFA (Association for Families who have Adopted Abroad)

01707 872129

information.affa@ntlworld.com

Public Record Office The National Archives

Kew
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 4DU

020 8876 3444

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

The Salvation Army Family Tracing Service

101 Newington Causeway
London SE1 6BN

020 7367 4500

www.salvationarmy.org.uk

Intercountry Adoption Centre

First Floor
71-73 High Street
Barnet
Herts EN5 5UR

020 8447 4753

www.icacentre.org.uk

NORCAP

National Organisation for
Counselling Adoptees and their
Parents

12 Church Road

Wheatley
Oxfordshire
OX33 1LU

01865 875000

www.norcap.org.uk

Useful Reading

All Families are Different

Sol Gordon

ISBN 1573927651

The Primal Wound – Understanding the Adopted Child

Nancy Newton Verrier (1993)

ISBN 0963648004

How I was Adopted

Joanne Cole, illustrated by

Maxie Chambliss (2000)

ISBN 0688 170552

Helping Children Cope with Separation and Loss

Claudia Jewett (1994)

ISBN 0713477660

Preparing for Reunion: Experiences of Contact After Adoption

Julia Feast, Elizabeth Webb, Sue
Seabrook and Michael Harwood

ISBN 1899783091

Adoption Search and Reunion: the Long Term Experience of Adopted Adults

Julia Feast, David Howe, (2000)

ISBN 189978330 X

Half a Million Women – Birth Mothers

David Howe (1992)

Phillida Sawbridge and

Diana Hinings

ISBN 0140154159

Heather has Two Mommies

Leslea Newman (2000), illustrated

by Diana Souza

ISBN 15555835430

It's a Family Affair: the Complete Lesbian Parenting Book

Lisa Saffron (2002)

ISBN 1873741626

Bruce's Story

Mauraeen Thom and

Celia MacIvle (1986)

ISBN 0907324274

Related by Adoption: a Handbook for Grandparents and Other Relatives

Hedi Argent (2004)

ISBN 1903699398

**Safe Contact: Children in
Permanent Placement and
Their Birth Relatives**

Catherine MacAskill (2002)

ISBN 1903855098

**The Adoption Reunion
Handbook**

Elizabeth Trinder, David Howe and
Julia Feast (2004)

ISBN 0470094222

Shqip

Kjo fletushkë është mbi Mbështetjen mbi Adoptimin në dispozicion në Haringey. Nëse e doni këtë të përkthyer në gjuhën tuaj, ju lutem plotësoni formularin dhe dërgojeni tek adresa falas e dhënë.

Polski

Niniejsza publikacja zawiera informacje na temat oferowanej w Haringey pomocy w zakresie adopcji. Aby otrzymać jej wersję w języku polskim należy wypełnić formularz i przesać go na podany adres zwolniony od opłaty pocztowej.

Français

Ce prospectus traite de l'Aide à l'Adoption à Haringey. Si vous souhaitez qu'il soit traduit dans votre langue, veuillez remplir le coupon et le renvoyer à l'adresse fournie (inutile de timbrer l'enveloppe).

Soomaali

Warqaddani waxay ku saabsantahay taageerada Korsashada carruurta aadan dhalin ee ay bixiyaan Haringey. Haddii aad rabto in lagu tarjumo luqaddaada, fadlan buuxi foomka oo ku soo celi cinwaanka boostiisu lacag la'aanta yahay ee lagu siiyay.

Kurdî Kurmancî

Ev belavok li ser Piştevanîya Ewladgirtinê ya ku peyde dibe agahîyê dide Heke hun dixwazin ku ev ji bo zimanê we were wergerandin, ji kerema xwe formê tije bikin û ji navnîşana posta bêpere ya dayî re bişînin.

Türkçe

Bu bröşür Haringey de sağlanan Evlatlık Edinme Desteği ile ilgilidir. Eğer bu bilgilerin kendi dilinize çevrilmesini istiyorsanız lütfen formu doldurun ve verilen ücretsiz posta adresine geri gönderin.

Please tell us if you would like a copy of this leaflet in another language that is not listed above or in any of the following formats, and send the form to the Freepost address below.

- ☐ In large print ☐ On audio tape ☐ In Braille ☐
- ☐ In another language, please state: _____



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Translation and Interpretation Services, 8th Floor, River Park House, 225 High Road, London N22 8HQ

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